

TRIBUTE TO GENE MCCARTHY,
IRISHMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. JACK QUINN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise today on the floor of this House in recognition of Mr. Gene McCarthy from Buffalo, NY in my district, as the 1999 Goin' South "Irishman of the Year."

Born in Buffalo's "Old First Ward" in 1926, Gene McCarthy is a lifelong member of our community. After high school, Gene began working on Buffalo's waterfront at Pillsbury grain elevators, where he spent twelve years.

In 1955, Gene wed Mary (Dories). He and his wife raised their three children, Patti, Bill, and Maureen to respect their proud Western New York and Irish-American heritage. In addition, the McCarthy's now have seven grandchildren.

Twenty-five years ago, Gene and Mary opened McCarthy's, a fine restaurant and tavern in the heart of the Old First Ward, at the corner of Hamburg and Republic Streets. Famous for its corned beef, fish fries, and friendly service, McCarthy's has become a true landmark. It is a proud symbol of not only his community, and not only the McCarthy family, but of our Irish heritage in Buffalo.

In 1996, I invited the Honorable Dermott Gallagher, then Irish Ambassador to the United States, to Buffalo to dedicate a monument which was erected in honor of the Great Famine in Ireland. During his stay, I took him to McCarthy's. Ambassador Gallagher has said that the tavern was his favorite place in all of Western New York, no doubt a reflection on the McCarthy's overwhelming hospitality.

Whether it is for the famous Notre Dame football parties in the fall, the Shamrock Run, the many local organizations and causes which the McCartys support, or the best St. Patrick's Day atmosphere outside of Ireland, McCarthy's Tavern and Gene and Mary McCarthy will always be an important part of the proud history of our City. I am proud to call him my friend.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to join with the entire McCarthy Family, the Goin' South community organization, and indeed, all of Western New York in tribute to Mr. Gene McCarthy, Irishman of the Year.

DEMOCRACY PROGRESSES IN
SLOVAKIA

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, this week a distinguished delegation from the Slovak parliament visited Washington to meet with congressional leaders and other officials. I regret that, because of a hearing on urgent developments in Kosovo, I was unable to meet with them. Nevertheless, the occasion of their visit prompts me to reflect on some of the developments in Slovakia since the elections there on September 25 and 26, 1998.

Since a new government was installed on October 30, there has been a sea change in

Slovak political life. The very fact that a peaceful transition of power occurred is something we could not have taken for granted, given the increasingly authoritarian rule of Vladimir Meciar manifested by, for example, the refusal of the parliament he controlled to seat two duly elected members.

Today, the situation is very different. The formation of a new government has included key changes that were much needed and will foster greater confidence in Slovakia's renewed process of democratization. In particular, the appointment of a new head of the intelligence service, the resolution of competing claims to the position of chief of the armed forces, and the selection of a new general prosecutor help address many of the concerns that arose during Meciar's tenure. The new government's efforts to hold previous officials accountable for their violations of the rule of law and manipulation of parliamentary and constitutional democracy is also a positive sign. During local elections in the fall, non-governmental monitors were permitted to observe the counting of the vote, further fostering public and international confidence in Slovakia's democratic structures. Direct presidential elections are scheduled to be held in May, which will fill a constitutional lacuna. The decision to permit, once again, the issuance of bi-lingual report cards restores common sense to the discussion of issues of concern to the Hungarian minority. The government's stated intent to address the concerns of the Romani minority—concerns which have led many Slovak Roma to seek asylum in other countries—is a welcome step in the right direction.

In short, Mr. Speaker, the new government is Slovakia has already undertaken important steps towards fulfilling the promises made when communism collapsed.

Slovakia is now at a critical juncture, having succeeded by a slim electoral margin in peacefully removing Vladimir Meciar after 4 years of increasing authoritarian rule. The new government must struggle to restore Slovakia's good name, repair the economy, and get Slovakia back on track for NATO and EU membership. If Slovakia is to succeed in this effort, it is critical that the current coalition hold together long enough to implement real reforms. As it seeks to do so, the new government will be aided by a wellspring of credibility with the internationally community and certainly in Washington, where as the Meciar government, in the end, had none.

That wellspring of credibility, however, is not bottomless and time is truly of the essence in Slovakia's reform process. I hope all of the parties participating in the ruling coalition will quickly address some of the issues that have been of special concern to the international community, including the adoption in the first half of this year of a minority language law. Such a step would be a concrete demonstration of the differences between this government and the last.

Mr. Speaker, I wish this new coalition government of Slovakia every success in their resolve to make lasting reforms.

TRIBUTE TO GRANDMARIE'S
CHICKEN PIE SHOP

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Grandmarie's Chicken Pie Shop on the occasion of their 42nd Anniversary. Grandmarie's has enjoyed 4 decades of success at their Tower District location.

Keeping it simple and keeping it delicious was the slogan of Marie Ross, the restaurant's namesake, original owner, and grandmother of current owner Gary Ross. The Ross chicken pie tradition dates back to the early part of the century when relatives to Marie Ross made creamy chicken tarts and left them on the window sill to cool. A legendary treat was formed and soon the Chicken Pie Shop was formed. After 42 years, Grandmarie's Chicken Pie Shop still follows Marie's advice, make it "simply delicious." Simplicity is the key, large portions with all of the food groups represented at a reasonable price continues to attract thousands of Fresnoans. A visit of Grandmarie's is a must for those new to the Fresno area, nothing can compare to the fine foods prepared there daily.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Grandmarie's Chicken Pie Shop on the occasion of their 42nd Anniversary. Grandmarie's remains one of Fresno's finest traditions. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Grandmarie's and the Ross family, many years of continued success.

HONORING FREDDIE HAMILTON

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Freddie Hamilton, for her tremendous contributions to the Brooklyn community and her exemplary community service.

As a native of New Orleans, LA, Freddie Hamilton has lived and worked in Central Brooklyn for almost 40 years. Over the years, Freddie has participated in numerous civic and political organizations and causes to improve the quality of life for children and families in her community.

Ms. Hamilton is the founding executive director of the Child development Support Corporation, a child welfare agency in Bedford-Stuyvesant. The agency employs 150 people and provides a range of social services to over 3,000 children and families annually.

After losing a 17-year-old son, as a result of gun violence, Ms. Hamilton became a founding member of Parents United to Rally for Gun Violence Elimination (PURGE). The organization was created to address the issues of gun violence among African American youth. Ms. Hamilton was successful plaintiff in the first class action strict liability suit against gun manufacturers.

Since 1994, Freddie has served as the elected Democratic Committeewoman (District Leader) for the 57th Assembly District in Brooklyn.

During a recent trip to Ghana, Freddie was honored in a traditional "Enstoolment Ceremony" to designate her a Queen Mother. She